

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

SECSTATE WASHDC 6045

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USUN NEW YORK 736

CINCPAC

USLIAISON OFFICE PEKING

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 4217

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AS, KS, KN

SUBJ: VISIT OF AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESEE TO
PYONGYANG AND SEOUL

REF: A) SEOUL 4560 (NOTAL) B) TOKYO 8420

1. SUMMARY: EMBOFF REVIEWED FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESEE'S
VISITS TO PYONGYANG AND SEOUL WITH DFA ON JUNE 26. DISCUSSION
BROUGHT OUT SOME NEW DETAILS ON PRC ATTITUDES TOWARDS KOREA, THE
AFTERMATH OF VIETNAM, THE INDIAN OCEAN, AND ON U.S. DEFENSE
FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA. NORTH KOREANS DID NOT RPT NOT GIVE
BELLICOSE IMPRESSION, WHILE ROK OFFICIALS SEEMED OBSESSED WITH
POSSIBILITY OF WAR. ROK OFFICIALS ALSO APPEARED OVERLY SANGUINE
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ON PROSPECTS FOR ACTION ON KOREA AT NEXT UNGA. END SUMMARY.

2. AS REQUESTED IN FINAL PARA REF A, ON JUNE 26 EMBOFF REVIEWED RECENT VISIT OF FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESEE TO PYONGYANG AND SEOUL WITH AUSTRALIAN DEPT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DENNIS ARGALL, CHIEF OF CHINA KOREA SECTION, WHO ACCOMPANIED WILLESEE AND SAT IN ON KEY CONVERSATIONS). IN ADDITION TO POINTS SIMILAR TO THOSE IN REFTELS, ARGALL COVERED FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF VISIT.

3. SIDELIGHTS FROM PRC: CONVERSATION WILLESEE HAD WITH PRC FOREIGN MINISTER CHIAO KUAN-HUA IN PEKING ON WAY TO KOREA DEALT LARGELY WITH BILATERAL AUSTRALIAN-PRC MATTERS, WITH CHIAO EVIDENTLY RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS THIRD-COUNTRY MATTERS. HOWEVER, WILLESEE EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN OVER RECENT VISIT TO PRC BY KIM IL-SUNG AND UNDERLINED POSSIBLE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES IF HOSTILITIES BROKE OUT AGAIN IN KOREAN PENINSULA. ACCORDING TO ARGALL, CHIAO SAID THAT KIM IL-SUNG VISIT IN EARLY MAY HAD LONG BEEN PLANNED AND HE INDICATED IT WAS ONLY FOURTUITOUSLY AFTER CHANGES IN VIET-NAM. CHIAO EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT NORTH KOREA WOULD NOT RPT NOT ATTACK SOUTH KOREA. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMEWHAT GREATER POSSIBILITY THAT SOUTH KOREA WOULD ATTACK NORTH KOREA. HOWEVER, CHIAO EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT U.S. WOULD RESTRAIN SOUTH KOREA FROM ANY SUCH ATTACK. CHIAO WAS AWARE THAT WILLESEE WAS TRAVELLING TO NORTH KOREA. HE SUGGESTED WILLESEE CALL ON KIM IL-SUNG, WHO, HE SAID, WAS AN INTERESTING PERSON, NOT AT ALL LIKE THE WAY USUALLY CARICATURIZED.

4. DISCUSSION ALSO TOUCHED ON RECENT EVENTS IN VIET-NAM. CHIAO SAID THAT DURING VIET-NAM WAR U.S. HAD BEEN QTE LIKE A MAN WITH 10 FINGERS CHASING 10 FLEAS END QTE. CHIAO SAID THAT NOW U.S. ROLE IN VIET-NAM IS OVER, U.S. MAY BE IN BETTER POSITION TO TAKE CARE OF ITS OTHER SECURITY COMMITMENTS IN EAST ASIA.

5. ARGALL SAID THAT CHIAO HAD REFERRED TO AUSTRALIAN INTEREST IN INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE AND ASKED, WITH SOME VEHE- MENCE, HOW AUSTRALIA COULD ASK U.S. NOT RPT NOT TO CARRY OUT DEVELOPMENT OF FACILITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA WHEN SOVIET QTE FISHING CRAFT END QTE WERE ALL OVER INDIAN OCEAN. HE SAID WITH SOME SARCASM THAT NO ONE KNEW WHAT KIND OF FISH THEY WERE CATCHING.

6. AT MEETING BETWEEN PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI AND WILLESEE, CHOU CONFIDENTIAL

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EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF NEED JAPANESE HAVE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S. CHOU SAID HE APPRECIATED THAT JAPANESE SHOULD MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH U.S. FIRST AND, IN SECOND PLACE, DEVELOP RELATIONS WITH PRC. HE MADE CLEAR THAT DEVELOPING RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND SOVIET UNION SHOULD, IN HIS VIEW, COME IN LAST PLACE.

7. WILLESEE ASKED CHOU IF PRC HAD ANY OBJECTIONS TO U.S. AND

JOINT AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN DEFENSE FACILITIES IN AUSTRALIA.
CHOU REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT RPT NOT KNOW WHAT THE FACILITIES
WERE FOR BUT THAT, IN ANY CASE, THIS IS MATTER FOR AUSTRALIA.

8. CONVERSATION IN PYONGYANG - MOST SUBSTANTIAL CONVERSATIONS
IN PYONGYANG WERE WITH MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS HO TAM, WHO
APPEARED TO AUSTRALIANS AS BALANCED AND POLISHED INDIVIDUAL,
NOT AT ALL GIVEN TO AGGRESSIVE POSTURE. WILLESEE AGAIN EXPRESSED
HIS CONCERN AT POSSIBILITY OF HOSTILITIES IN KOREA AND ASKED
IF NORTH KOREA REALLY SAW ITS INTERESTS SERVED BY RENEWAL OF
WAR. WILLESEE REMARKED THAT REUNIFICATION BY PEACEFUL MEANS
SEEMED UNLIKELY, WAR WOULD BE TOO DANGEROUS AND DESTRUCTIVE,
AND RENEWAL OF DIALOGUE WITH SOUTH KOREA SEEMED ONLY REMAINING
ALTERNATIVE. AUSTRALIA, FOR ITS PART, RECOGNIZED ROK BOTH AS
STATE AND GOVERNMENT AND WOULD CONTINUE TO DO SO. HO TAM AGREED
THAT PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION WAS NOT RPT NOT EARLY PROSPECT AND
SAID THAT HE DID NOT RPT NOT THINK RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES IN
KOREA LIKELY.

9. ARGALL WAS MUCH IMPRESSED WITH EXTENT OF DEVELOPMENT
AROUND PYONGYANG, IN FORM OF BUILDING OF CONSIDERABLE SIZE AND CON-
CRETE HIGHWAYS, WHICH HE HAD NOT RPT NOT EXPECTED. HE EXPRESSED
VIEW THAT NORTH KOREA WAS NOT RPT NOT PREPARED TO RISK ALL OF
THIS IN RENEWED HOSTILITIES. WILLESEE COMMENTED TO NORTH KOREANS
THAT IT WOULD BE A PITY TO SEE THE ARCHITECTURALLY IMPRESSIVE
CAPITAL CITY, PYONGYANG, REDUCED TO RUBBLE ONCE AGAIN.

10. CONVERSATIONS IN SEOUL - ARGILL SAID THAT ROK FOREIGN MINISTER
KIM TONG-CHO SEEMED TO BE MUCH MORE UP-TIGHT THAN HIS NORTH
KOREAN COUNTERPART. ROK OFFICIALS AUSTRALIANS TALKED TO SEEMED TO
BE OBSESSED WITH PROSPECT OF WAR. IN PARTICULAR, ROK OFFICIALS
TALKED AT LENGTH ABOUT ISSUE OF THE TUNNELS THROUGH THE DMZ,
WHICH AUSTRALIANS WERE EVIDENTLY NOT DISPOSED TO TAKE
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SERIOUSLY. WILLESEE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER REPRESSIVE ACTIONS
IN SOUTH KOREA WHICH COULD, IN HIS VIEW, REDUCE AUSTRALIAN
SUPPORT FOR ROK IN THE EVENT OF A RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES.

11. ARGILL SAID THAT ROK OFFICIALS SEEMED TO BE EXCESSIVELY OP-
TIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR UN RESOLUTION ON SIMULTANEOUS
ADMISSION OF TWO KOREAS OR FRIENDLY RESOLUTION ON UNC. ARGALL
SAID THAT GOA HAS IMPRESSION THAT PROSPECTS FOR NORTH KOREAN
DRAFT RESOLUTION CALLING FOR DISSOLUTION OF UNC AND WITHDRAWAL
OF FOREIGN TROOPS SEEM TO BE FAIRLY GOOD.

12. COMMENT: AUSTRALIAN MEDIA JUNE 26, PROBABLY REFLECTING
CAREFUL BRIEFING BY DFA, WERE VERY WARM IN THEIR PRAISE OF
WILLESEE'S VISITS TO NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA. THIS REFLECTED GOOD
AND SYMPATHETIC PRESS COVERAGE DURING TRIP PROVIDED BY REPORTERS

ACCOMPANYING WILLESEE.
GREEN

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